

ACTORS' THINK TANK NOTES

Wednesday, August 11, 2021

Taja Simpson - Actress, Director, Writer, Speaker

11 minutes in, slates ended

- I. Slates
 - a. Know your type
 - b. The thing you will book the most is the thing you naturally are
 - c. Let your light shine! Be you! Show your personality!

- II. Booking Jobs
 - a. Let yourself be pigeon holed....especially in the beginning!
 - b. Relationship Capitol is how this business works
 - c. Always know your lines!
 - d. Use sides to practice. Pretend they are real auditions so when the real auditions DO come you are prepared
 - e. If you walk in off of the street, you have to be talented
 - f. Bring your A Game everytime and be consistent for CD's
 - g. The more you practice, the better you become
 - h. KNOW YOUR CHARACTER! Have a thorough backstory and let yourself "marinate" in who the character is
 - i. "I get excited about auditions!" They are a win to get asked to audition!
 - j. ALWAYS BE OFF BOOK!

17 minutes

- III. Work Ethic
 - a. Bring your BEST every single time
 - b. You cannot half a\$\$ it
 - c. "I love the energy I have after nailing it and knowing that I did the homework...I revel in it!
 - d. Treat the audition like you are working on set
 - e. Be your absolute BEST!
 - f. Leave your audition feeling great
 - g. "If you give me an audition...I am going to make it difficult for you to not hire me."
 - h. Acting is using your voice. Learn to adjust volume and speed to create an effect.
 - i. Print Sides and practice with them
 - j. Put the work in. It will help you get better
 - k. Coaching helps her be a better actor and director
 - l. She gets coached for every job she lands
 - m. Acting classes are important because you also learn so much by watching others

25 minutes

IV. Know your Character

- a. Have a detailed backstory
- b. Know your character so well that if a director makes a change you know how that character would react
- c. "Beat out each scene"
- d. She will ask for another take if she doesn't feel that she did her best and she will take a moment to ground herself
- e. When an actor isn't prepared then THEY show up. You do not want to show up while you are acting!

**31 minutes

- f. When you bring questions / ideas about your character to the director, it shows that you are committed
- g. The higher her credit was, the more comfortable she felt asking questions
- h. Guest star / Co star should always feel comfortable asking questions
- i. Growing up she would play pretend. She would watch a movie and then act the entire thing out. She didn't realize she was acting.

**36 minutes

V. More Conversation

- a. Experience will give you confidence
- b. Get on the radar of CD's, send a postcard, do something to stand out
- c. Working with Tyler Perry they would shoot 100 pages a day
- d. HMU - she has a consultation ahead of time
- e. Auditions - make sure you leave an impression of YOU. It is YOUR time! Always have a button at the end.
- f. Actors access is her fave way to self submit and get work
- g. Never burn bridges....this business is all about who you know!

**55 minutes

VI. More about Taja

- a. TheWorkingActorsAcademy.com is her creation to help answer the questions of actors
- b. How do I get started in acting?
- c. How to 'crack the acting code?'
- d. There is a course that you can take at your own leisure
- e. She has also written a book called "women Who Shine" and it will be out soon